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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [TSPL](#) [KNNP](#) [ETTC](#) [ENRG](#) [TRGY](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: INDIA CANCELS OVERFLIGHT PERMISSION FOR FLIGHT OF
PROLIFERATION CONCERN

REF: A. STATE 84151
[B](#). UNVIE 437

Classified By: Acting DCM George Deikun for Reasons 1.4 B and D

[1](#)1. (S) The Charge d'Affaires delivered ref A demarche on August 6 to Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma and Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Joint Secretary for the Americas Gaitri Kumar. Sharma noted the urgency of the issue and the Indian government's obligation to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 1718. Neither Sharma nor Kumar was aware of the flight, but Kumar promised to forward the non-paper to the appropriate agencies within the GOI. MEA director for the Americas Vani Rao told PolOff on August 7 that the issue had been brought to the attention of National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan earlier that same day, but she did not yet know what the response would be.

[1](#)2. (SBU) A front-page article in the August 8 edition of The Indian Express reported that on the afternoon of August 7 India withdrew permission for the North Korean plane to overfly Indian airspace en route to Iran just before it could take off from a stopover in Mandalay, Burma. The action was reportedly taken in response to instructions from the Prime Minister's Office.

[1](#)3. (C) MEA director Rao confirmed the newspaper's account to PolOff on August 8.

[1](#)4. (C) COMMENT. It is encouraging that India responded immediately and positively, which reflects the importance India places on its formal nonproliferation commitments. Indian officials also did not appreciate Iran's criticism of India's safeguards agreement at the August 1 IAEA Board meeting (ref B). This is a good news story in the context of the remaining steps in the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Initiative, in which India's nonproliferation record is likely to be scrutinized. END COMMENT.

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